

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of treating diabetes comprising administering to an animal having diabetes an active compound from a berry from a plant of the *Panax* genus.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the berry is from the ginseng species *Panax ginseng* or *Panax quinquefolius*.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the active compound comprises an anti-hyperglycemic constituent.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the active compound comprises a ginsenoside.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the ginsenoside is Rg1, Re, Rb1, Rc, Rb2 or Rd.
- 10 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the ginsenoside is Re.
7. The method of claim 3, wherein the active compound comprises at least two ginsenosides.
8. The method of claim 3, wherein the active compound comprises non-ginsenoside components of berry extract.
- 15 9. The method of claim 3, wherein the active compound is ginsenoside free.
10. The method of claim 3, wherein the active compound comprises an anti-obesity constituent.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein the animal has non-insulin dependent diabetes.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein the animal is a mammal.
- 20 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the mammal is a human.
14. The method of claim 13, wherein the human is obese.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the composition is administered via a parenteral route.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein the parenteral route is intraperitoneal, intravenous, subcutaneous, intramuscular, intradermal or transdermal.

5 17. The method of claim 1, wherein the composition is administered via an alimentary route.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the alimentary route is oral, rectal, sublingual or buccal.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein the composition is administered as a dose.

10 20. The method of claim 19, wherein the dose is administered at least once a day.

21. The method of claim 19, wherein the dose is administered preprandial.

22. The method of claim 1, wherein the composition is administered as a series of doses.

IV 15 23. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an active compound from a berry from a plant of the Panax genus and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

24. The composition of claim 23, wherein the berry is from the ginseng species *Panax ginseng* or *Panax quinquefolius*.

25. The composition of claim 23, wherein the active compound comprises a ginsenoside.

20 26. The composition of claim 25, wherein the ginsenoside is Re.

V 27. A method of increasing body weight loss comprising administering to the animal an active compound from a berry from a plant of the Panax genus.

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28. The method of claim 27, wherein the active compound comprises a ginsenoside.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the ginsenoside is Re.

30. A method of treating an animal having hyperglycemia comprising administering to the animal an active compound from a berry from a plant of the Panax genus.

5 31. The method of claim 30, wherein the active compound comprises a ginsenoside.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein the ginsenoside is Re.

33. The method of claim 30, wherein the active compound comprises an anti-obesity constituent.

34. A method of treating an animal to decrease blood glucose levels comprising 10 administering to the animal an active compound from a berry from a plant of the Panax genus.

35. The method of claim 34, wherein the active compound comprises an anti-hyperglycemic constituent.

36. The method of claim 35, wherein the active compound comprises a ginsenoside.

15 37. The method of claim 36, wherein the ginsenoside is Re.

38. The method of claim 35, wherein the active compound comprises an anti-obesity constituent.

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39. A method of treating an animal to decrease plasma cholesterol comprising 20 administering to the animal an active compound from a berry from a plant of the Panax genus.

40. The method of claim 39, wherein the active compound comprises a ginsenoside.

41. The method of claim 40, wherein the ginsenoside is Re.

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42. A method of screening for an active compound from a berry of a plant of the *Panax* genus comprising:

- obtaining berry extract; and
- analyzing the extract for the active compound.

5 43. The method of claim 42, further comprising isolating the active compound.

44. The method of claim 43, further comprising identifying the isolated compound.

45. The method of claim 44, further comprising synthesizing the identified compound.

46. The method of claim 42, wherein the extract comprises at least one ginsenoside.

10 47. The method of claim 42, wherein the extract comprises non-ginsenoside components.

48. The method of claim 47, wherein the extract is ginsenoside free.

49. The method of claim 42, further comprising administering the fractions to an animal having hyperglycemia.

15 50. The method of claim 49, further comprising measuring blood glucose, wherein a decrease in blood glucose indicates that the fraction comprises an active compound.